

APPRECIATION OF LYRIC POETRY

A CONTRACT FOR THE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL
OR THE JUNIOR COLLEGE

Part One—Required Jobs

I. Reading Lyrics

Form into groups of about six persons each, and select a leader for each group. Choose a short lyric for him to read before the class, and discuss its meaning with him. The representative from each group will then read his lyric, and the class will decide which group has the best reading. In this decision they will consider the selection made, and the reading of it. Continue this until each pupil in each group has read a poem to the class.

(Books containing good selections are *Magic Casements*, Carhart and McGhee; *Literature and Life*, Greenlaw; *Readings in Literature*, Volume II, Hanes and McCoy; and *Golden Treasury*, Palgrave.)

II. Making Anthologies

A. Selecting the poems

1. Prepare to read five or six of your favorite lyrics to the class. Be able to tell why you wish each included in our class anthology.
2. Choose two of these poems that have not been considered for the anthology, and prove to the class that they should be included in it.
3. The class will vote for the poems they wish included in the anthology.

B. Compiling the anthology

1. Group the anthology according to these types of lyric poetry: ode, sonnet, elegy, ballad, rondeau.
2. Decide on the make-up of the anthology; kind and size of paper, type of cover, table of contents, and illustrations. These anthologies will be mimeographed, and a copy made available to each of you.

III. Sensing Rhythm

Select for rhythmic qualities several short

lyrics. Be prepared to read these to the class.

As you read your lyric to the class, the class will indicate stresses by tapping the desk with pencil.

Sense of rhythm should be so well fixed that you can always feel the stressed syllables even in reading silently.

Any of these poems are full of rhythm:

How They Brought the Good News from Aix to Ghent. Robert Browning.

L'Envoi. Rudyard Kipling.

Mandalay. Rudyard Kipling.

The Song of the Chattahoochee. Sidney Lanier.

The Raven. Edgar Allan Poe.

Annabel Lee. Edgar Allan Poe.

Break, Break, Break. Alfred Tennyson.

Crossing the Bar. Alfred Tennyson.

The Blessed Damozel. Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

Insomnia. Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

IV. Writing Poetry

A. Select in class a subject on which to write a poem. The poem will be written on the board line by line as suggested by members of the class. When the poem is completed, check for meaning, delicacy of thought, unity, rime, and rhythm.

B. Now, write a poem of your own. Choose a simple emotional experience which you still feel. Try to improve on the poem written by the class; a lyric poem by one person has more unity of feeling than has a lyric by many persons.

V. Memorizing Poetry

Memorize one hundred lines of poetry. This job must be done before any record can be made on the class chart. (Optional job, number VII).

In general, it is well to memorize passages that

A. Are quoted frequently.

B. Impress you as the perfect expression of a great thought or idea.

- C. Bear on, or enrich your experiences, especially your physical environment.

VI. Making Definitions

Be able to make a definition of each of the following terms: Lyric, rime, assonance, repetition, alliteration, meter, iambus, physical experience, psychic experience, trochee, dactyl, couplet, imagery, measure, metaphor, tetrameter, pentameter, hexameter, refrain, rime-scheme, anapest, onomatopoeia, spondee, tone color.

Be sure that the definitions do not have a "dictionary ring" to them. (Get these to a great extent from class discussion, or see *An Introduction to Poetry*, Alden; *A Study of Poetry*, Perry, using index in each case.)¹

II. Optional Jobs

I. Scanning Poetry

Compare the rhythm and rime schemes of several lyric poems.

- A. Be able to distinguish trochaic, dactylic, iambic, and anapestic meters.
- B. Select any poem and scan the lines.

(Use *An Introduction to Poetry*, Alden; and *A Study of Poetry*, Perry.)

II. Studying the Subjective Element in Lyric Poetry

Be able to point out the main forces in the life of any lyric poet you select. Note how his life influenced his poetry.

A. Note especially:

1. Do his poems reflect the nature and experiences of the poet?
2. Do his poems reflect the public affairs of his time?

B. Compare two lyric poets such as

1. Browning and Tennyson
2. Keats and Shelley
3. Poe and Longfellow
4. Frost and Robinson
5. Teasdale and Lowell (Amy)

Show how their experiences and ideals

in life make their poetry similar or dissimilar.

III. Studying Tone Color

Choose a lyric poem and show in what ways it is rich in tone color. To do this analyze the poem for internal rime, assonance, repetition, alliteration, and onomatopoeia.

Some poems particularly rich in this element are:

She Walks in Beauty. Byron.

An Epitaph. de la Mare.

Arabia. de la Mare.

The Humble Bee. Emerson.

Sea Rose. "H. D."

Loveliest of Trees. Housman.

La Belle Dame Sans Merci. Keats.

To Helen. Poe.

Ulalume. Poe.

Tell Me Where Is Fancy Bred. Shakespeare.

You may, however, choose any other poem rich in tone color.

IV. Studying Imagery

The theme of Masfield's *Sea Fever* is the longing and insatiate desire of a seaman for the sea.

- A. Make a list of the images used in each stanza.

- B. Write after each image others that might have been used, and combine them in different ways to see the effect.

- C. Change the adjectives in the images.

At the end of this experiment you will realize how greatly the author's intention affects the choice of imagery.

V. Studying Words

- A. Make a list of the words expressing physical experience in *The Eve of St. Agnes* by Keats, lines 262 to 270. Defend your list before the class.

- B. Likewise, list the words expressing psychic experience in *Remember*, by Christina Rossetti. Be able to defend your selection of words.

¹For guidance in definition making: *Practice Leaves in Junior English*, Logan and Anthony; *Good English in Speaking and Writing*, Book VI, VII, or VIII, Young and Memmott.

VI. Illustrating Lyric Poetry

A. Illustrate lyric poetry by bringing to class pictures which

1. Fit a particular lyric.
2. Express the emotions of the painter as a lyric expresses the emotion of the poet.

If you do No. 1, be able to show how the painting and the poem compare in feeling.

If you do No. 2, tell how the painting is a "lyric" to the artist.

The pictures must be mounted well enough to gain the approval of the class; otherwise, they will not be accepted.

or

B. Bring a phonograph record of some lyric put to music. Play it to the class several times. Tell the name of the poem, the author, and the theme of the lyric. Explain why that lyric was peculiarly suited to be put to music.

VII. Memorizing Poetry

Record your own progress in memorizing lyric poetry on a chart posted in the classroom. A sample chart is given you below:

Chart Showing Progress of Pupils in Memorizing Lyric Poetry

Name	Lines of Poetry Memorized											
	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	110	120
Adams, Ellen.....												
Bowers, Mary.....												
Cole, James.....												
Davis, John.....												

VIII. Listing Poems According to Theme

Choose one subject such as: *the sea, love, birds, death, animals*. Make a list of all the poems with their authors that you can find on the theme you select. Narrow your field of choice until you can make the list rather complete.

IX. Writing Poetry

Write a poem on any subject you select. All the poems written will be judged by the class as to their merit.

Bibliography

I. Material for Method

A. Books

Bates, Arlo—*Talks on the Teaching of Literature*. Houghton Mifflin Co. (Pages 207-221).

Bolenius, Emma—*Teaching Literature in Grammar Grades and High Schools*. Houghton Mifflin Co. (Pages 49-90).

Fairchild, A. H. R.—*Teaching Poetry in High School*. Houghton Mifflin Co.

Huber, Bruner and Curry—*Children's Interests in Poetry*. Rand McNally and Co.

Rickert, Edith—*New Methods for the Study of Literature*. University of Chicago Press.

B. Magazines.

Eareckson—*A Painless Introduction to Lyric Poetry*, *English Journal*, September, 1925.

Fiske, Christobel—*Problems in Teaching of Poetry*, *English Journal*, October, 1923.

Pendleton, Charles S.—*The Teaching of Poetry*, *English Journal*, May, 1924.

II. Material for Enjoyment and Appreciation.

Alden, Raymond—*An Introduction to Poetry*. Henry Holt and Co. (Pages 55-73.)

Carhart-McGhee—*Magic Casements*, Macmillan.

Eastman, Max—*The Enjoyment of Poetry*. Scribner.

Erskine, John—*The Kinds of Poetry*. Duffield.

Greenlaw and Miles—*Literature and Life*, Book II. Scott Foresman and Co.

Hanes and McCoy—*Readings in Literature, Volume II*. Macmillan.

Neilson, William A.—*Essentials of Poetry*. Houghton Mifflin Co.

Palgrave, Francis—*Golden Treasury*. Allyn and Bacon

Perry, Bliss—*A Study of Poetry*. Houghton Mifflin Co. (Pages 227-298).

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American education week will be observed this year from Monday, November 7, to Sunday, November 13, inclusive. The American Legion and the National Education Association are cooperating to arrange the program.